

**CANADA'S C-FORCE**  
**IN**  
**HONG KONG**  
**AND ITS FORERUNNER**

**-- FROM A**  
**SOCIAL PHILATELY APPROACH**

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1

# BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO CANADA'S C-FORCE IN HONG KONG

- Has been referred to as:
  - **C-Force**
  - **Canadian Force C**
  - **Force C**
  - **Care Force C**
  - **Canadian Care Force C**

# TRANSPORT TO HONG KONG

- Canada sent 2 battalions to help in the defense of Hong Kong (HK) just before the Japanese Invasion of HK on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>, **1941**.
- These were the **Winnipeg Grenadiers (WG)** and the **Royal Rifles of Canada (RRC)**.
- 1,975 men of all ranks set sail on **TSS Awatea** and **HMCS Prince Robert** (150 men only) from Vancouver on Oct 27<sup>th</sup>, 1941 and made brief stops in Honolulu, Hawaii on Nov 2<sup>nd</sup> and Manila, Philippines on Nov 15<sup>th</sup>, **reaching HK on Nov 16<sup>th</sup>**.



Insignia WG



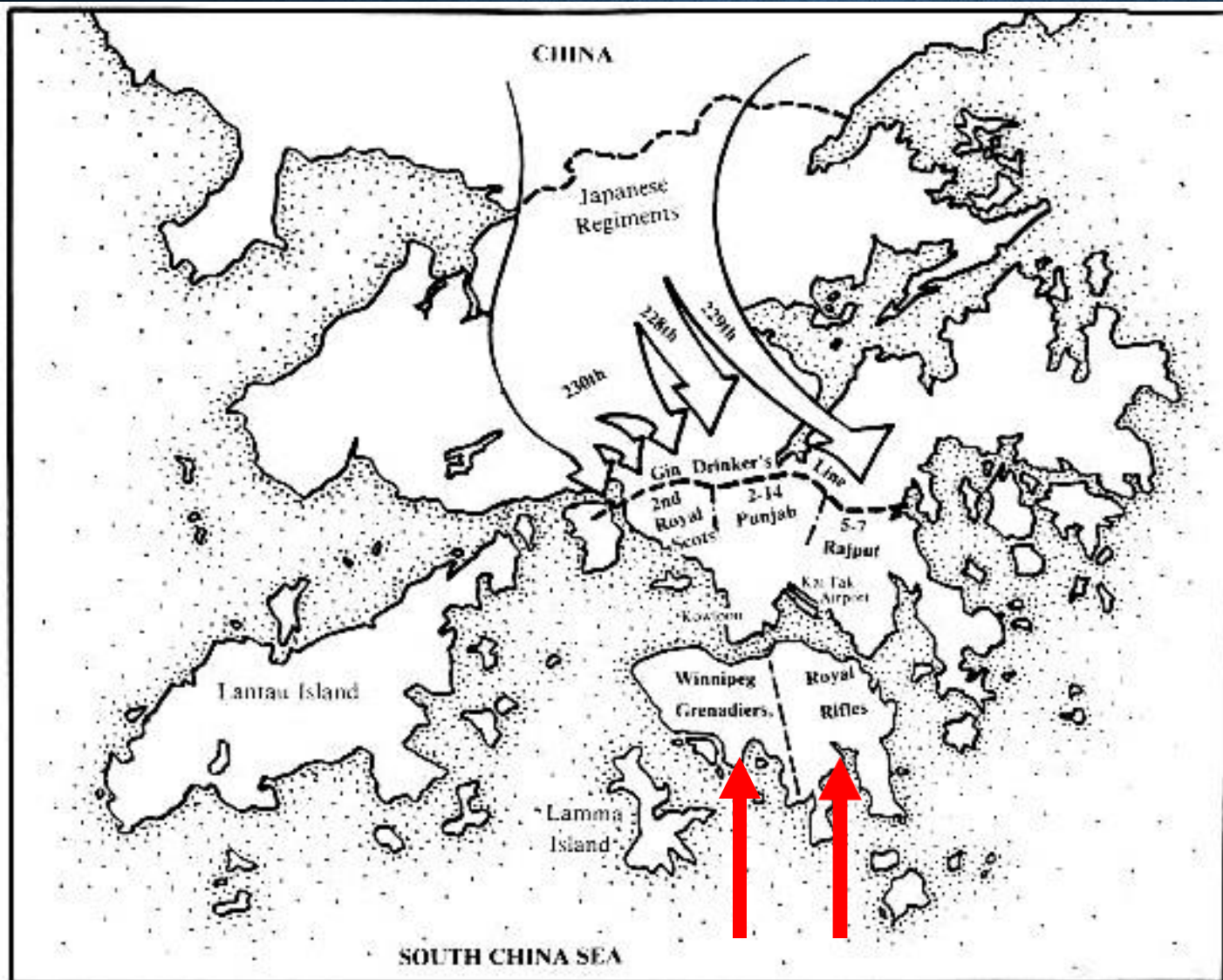
TSS Awatea



Insignia RRC

# MAP OF THE **BATTLE OF HONG KONG** FIRST STRIKE ON **1941 DEC 8<sup>TH</sup>**

(FROM HKVCA WEBSITE)



3-prong attack by Japanese Infantry regiments, 230<sup>th</sup> (west), 228<sup>th</sup> (center) and 229<sup>th</sup> (east) from the 38<sup>th</sup> division of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Army. Also with 38<sup>th</sup> Mountain Artillery regiment, the 38<sup>th</sup> Engineering regiment and attached were 2 more independent Mountain Artillery regiments. (From Canada At War website)



## 2 POSTAL HISTORY OF C-FORCE IN HK FROM A SOCIAL PHILATELY APPROACH

Y-Force in Jamaica as forerunner, enroute to HK, arrival in HK,  
detained mail, returned mail and POW mail HK/Japan.

### I) FORERUNNER (1): Y FORCE IN JAMAICA

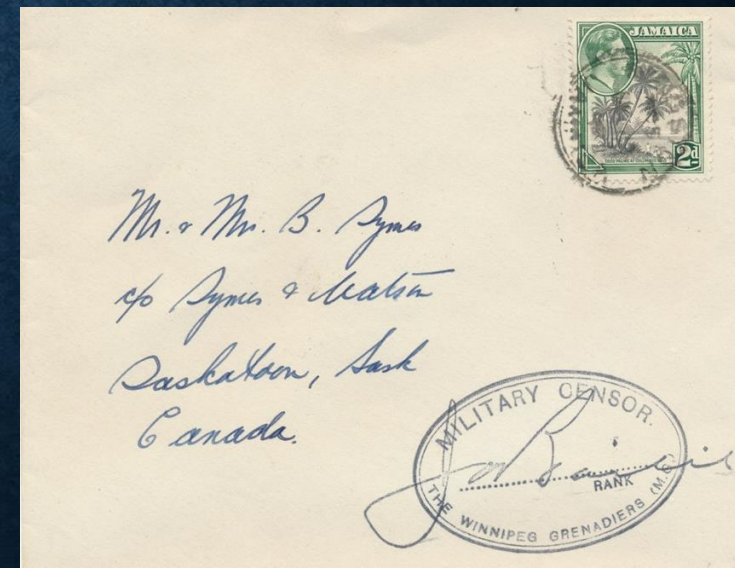


Sent by a member of WG, from Kingston, Jamaica,  
1940 Jul 9.

Early cover sent only 18 days after their  
arrival in Jamaica. Sender was not  
required to put his name on the cover.  
This would soon change. Censor's  
signature cannot be deciphered.

Sent by Private **Stanley Delbert Symes**, H6928, C Company,  
WG, from Kingston, Jamaica, 1940 OC?

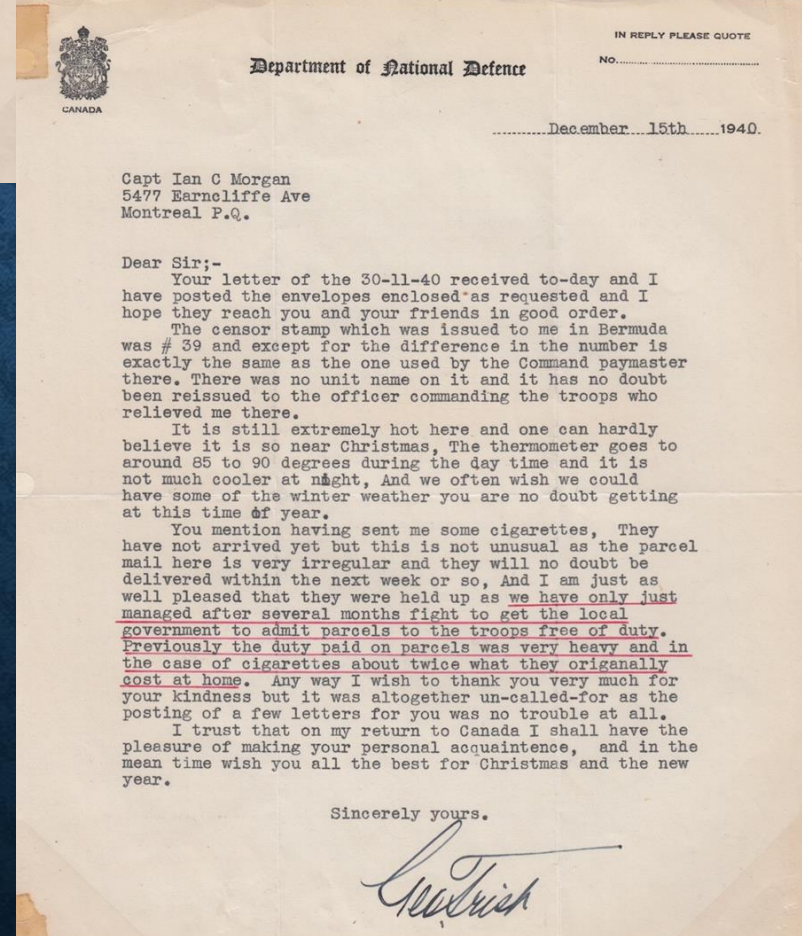
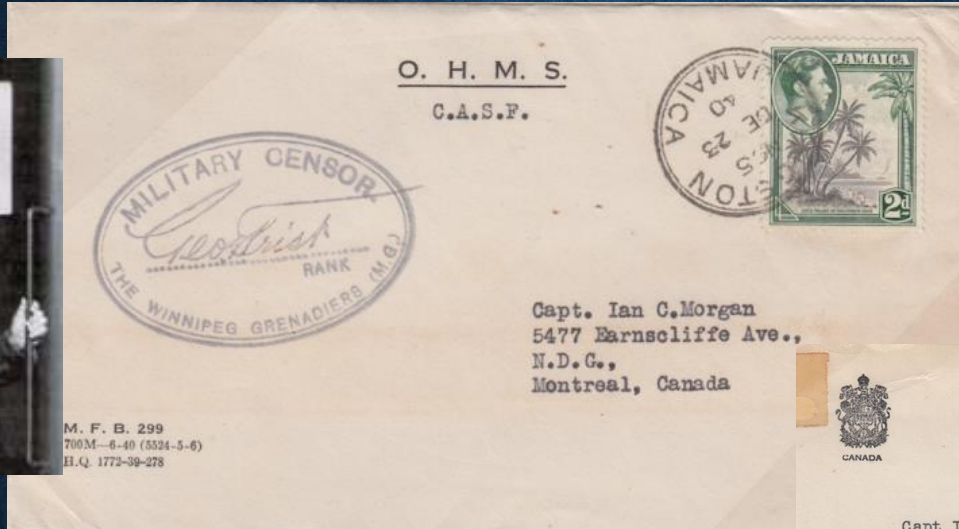
Censored by Major Kenneth George Baird, who was captured in  
Sham Shui Po, interned at North Point, Camp H and transferred to  
Sham Shui Po, Camp S, until liberation. He passed away in March  
1990.





# FORERUNNER (2): Y FORCE IN JAMAICA

Sent and self-censored by Major **George Trist** WG to Department of National Defence 1940 Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> (enclosure).



(HKVCA website)

In HK he was interned at all 3 camps that were recorded to have held Canadian POWs, i.e. North Point Camp H, Sham Shui Po Camp S and Argyle Camp N. He passed away in May 1997.



Major **George Trist** reported on the receipt of the censor stamp (marking) and also trouble with Jamaica Customs on duties on importing Cigarettes from home (underlined in red).



# II) MAIL ENROUTE AT HONOLULU NOV 2

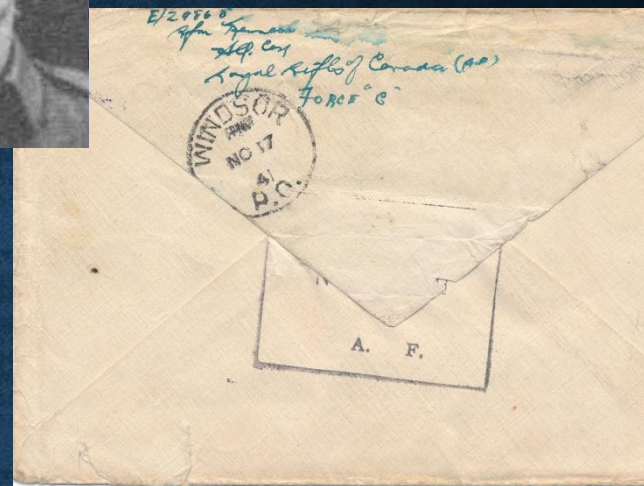


Lt. MacDougall

Sent by Rifleman **Kenneth Muir**, E29868, RRC and Censored by Lieutenant **Peter Lewis MacDougall**.

(HKVCA website)

(HKVCA website)



Ken Ellison (*Force C, The Canadian Army's HK story*, pg. 6) recorded an item with WG HQ markings on the same day from Honolulu, but not this marking for RRC



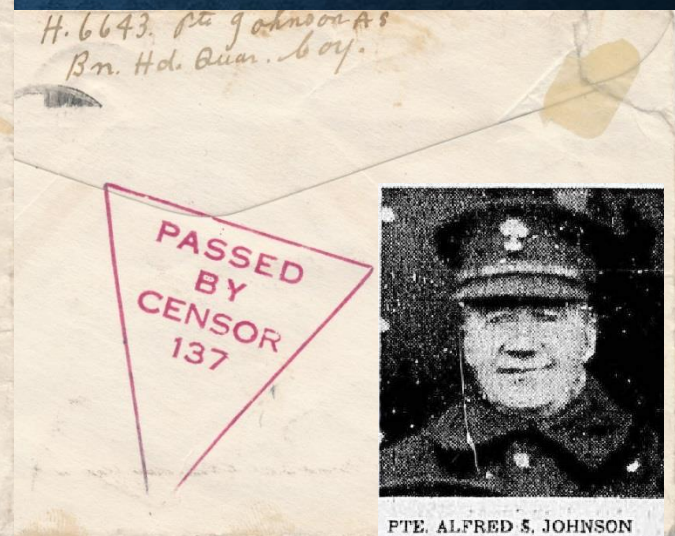


# III) ARRIVAL IN HK (1)

Nov 28<sup>th</sup>, sent 12 days after arrival in HK. Censored by Major **K.G. Baird** WG. Written by Private **Alfred Stanley Johnson** WG at Battalion HQ company, who received a MiD (Mention-in-Dispatches) decoration.

**Besides the 2 battalions sent, there was also an HQ company sent to HK.**

Carried on the last surface transport leaving HK before the Japanese Invasion



PTE. ALFRED S. JOHNSON  
(HKVCA website)

Number 137 triangular British army censor marking was assigned to WG, usually found in black ink or violet ink, but not in vermillion ink

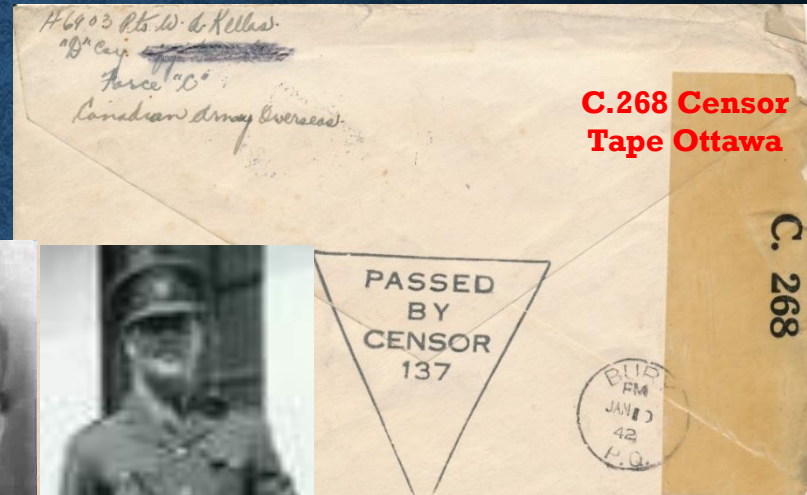
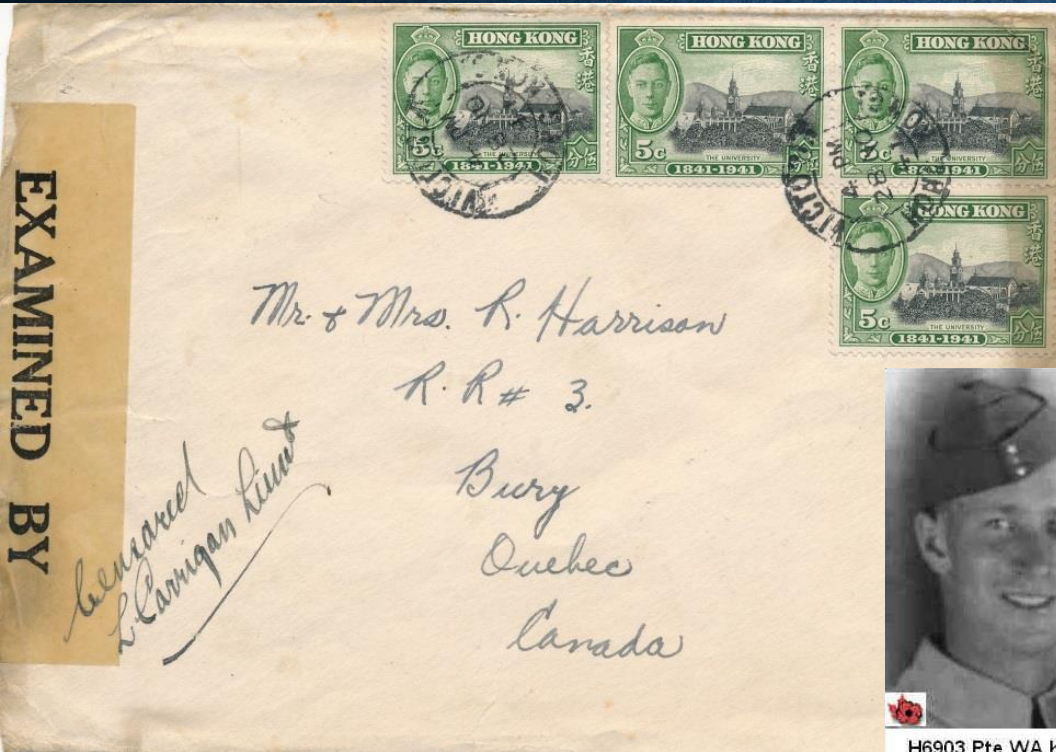
**(Richard Whittington confirms this is the only one in red ink he has recorded)**



# ARRIVAL IN HK (2)

Censored by **Leonard B. Corrigan** WG, Nov 28<sup>th</sup>. He was wounded in action Dec 24<sup>th</sup>, with MiD decoration.

Carried on the last surface transport leaving HK before Japanese Invasion



H6903 Pte WA Kellas



Lt. Corrigan



(HKVCA website)

Sent by Private **William Alexander Kellas**, H6903, D Company, WG. MIA Dec 21<sup>st</sup>, 2 days after Major Gresham and Master Sergeant Osborne VC was killed. He was last seen around Jardine's Lookout. Arrival CDS Bury, Quebec 1942 Jan 10<sup>th</sup>. 2 weeks after the capitulation of HK



# IV) DETAINED IN HK (1) FROM DEC 1941 TO SEPT 1945

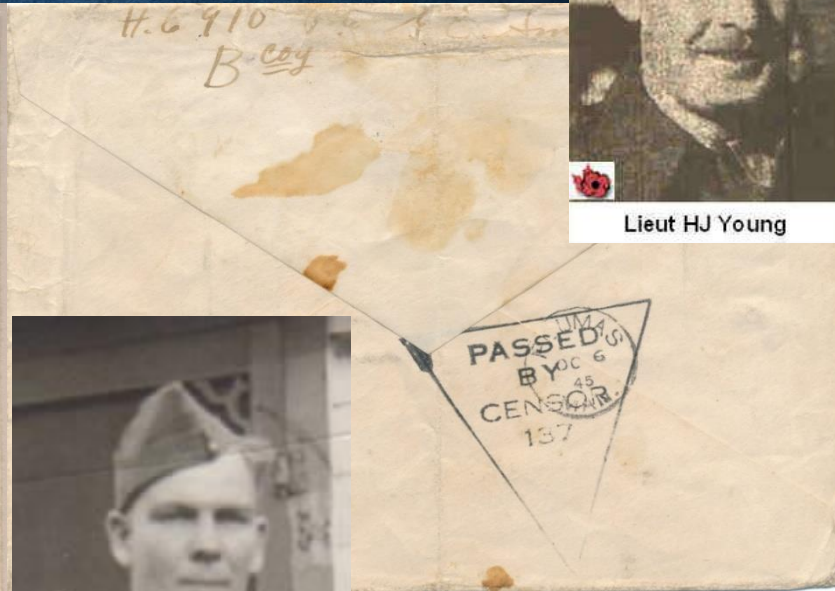
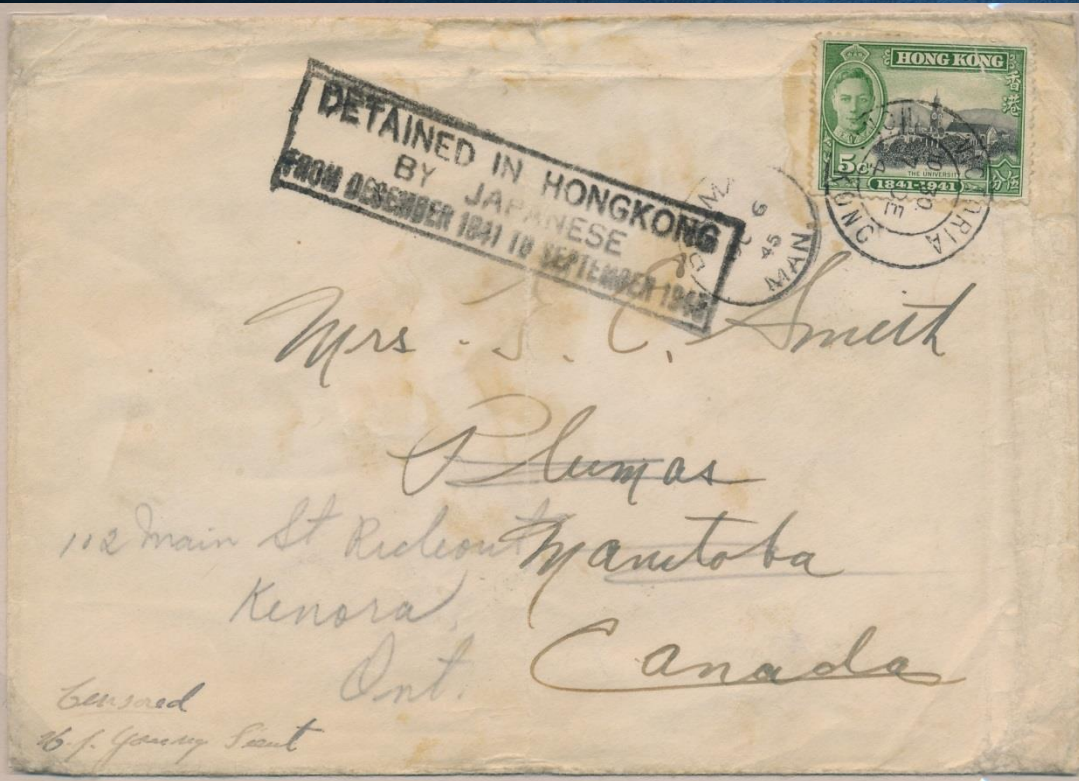


(HKVCA website)



Lieut HJ Young

Dec 7<sup>th</sup> 10:30 AM, Censored by Lieutenant **Hugh James Young**, B-Company, 12<sup>th</sup> Platoon Commander, KIA on Dec 21, 1941. Sent by Private **George Ernest Smith**, H6910, B-Company, WG. As POW in Sept. 1943 was sent to Japan to work at a nickel mine and refinery. He passed away in January 1966.



(HKVCA website)

Detained covers with arrival markings after the war are scarce.

This with Plumas, Manitoba CDS, Oct 6<sup>th</sup>, 1945



# DETAINED IN HK (2) FROM DEC 1941 TO SEPT 1945

Dec 7<sup>th</sup>, 11 AM. Self-censored by Major **K.G. Baird** WG,  
second highest ranking officer recorded as a censor



Maj KG Baird

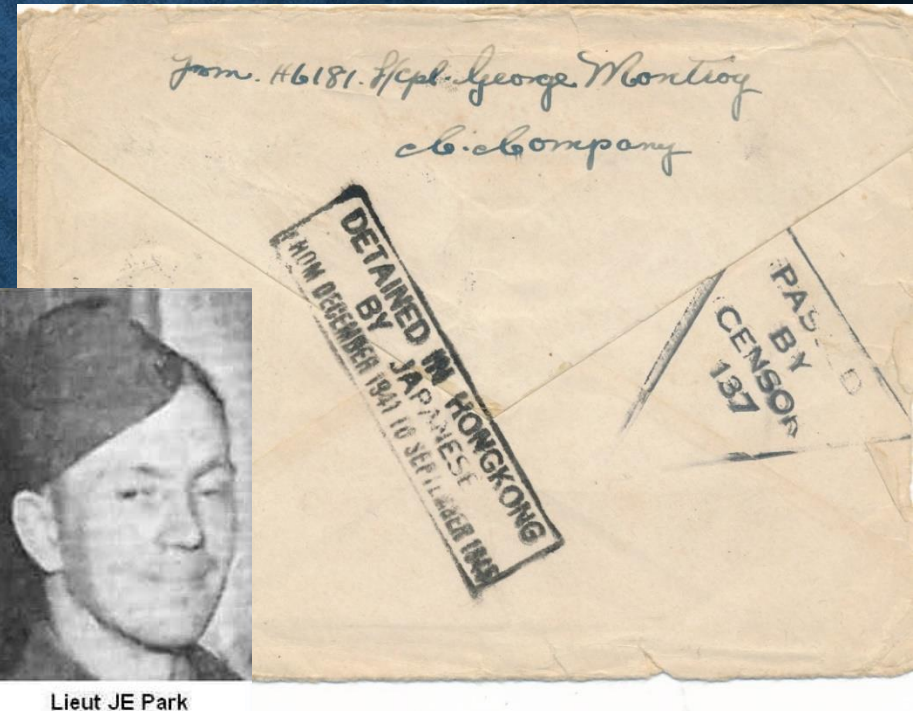
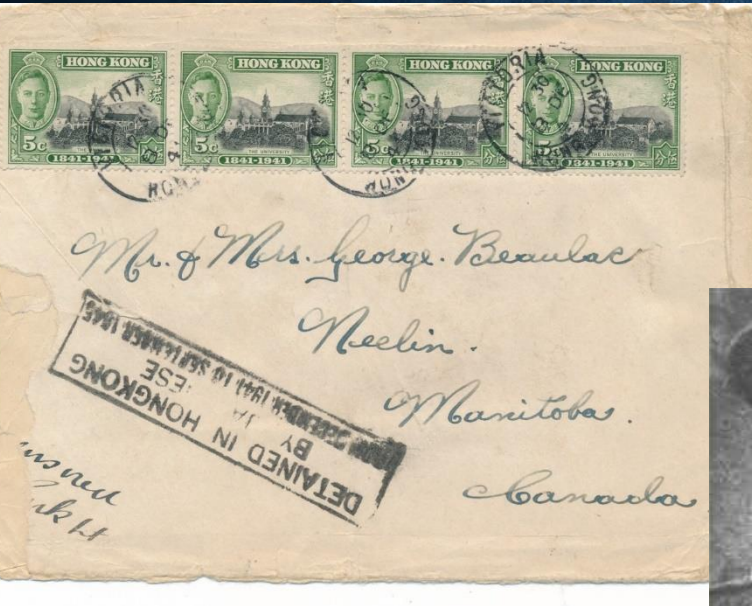
(HKVCA website)



# DETAINED IN HK (3) FROM DEC 1941 TO SEPT 1945

Dec 8<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 PM, invasion already started at 8 AM.

Censored by Second Lieutenant **John Elphinstone Park**, B-Company, Platoon Commander. Sent by Lance Corporal **George Montroy**, H6181, C-Company, WG. Wounded in Action Xmas Day. As POW, in Sept. 1943 was sent to Japan to work in a nickel mine and refinery. He passed away in October 1987.



H6181 LCpl G Montroy



Lieut JE Park

(HKVCA website)

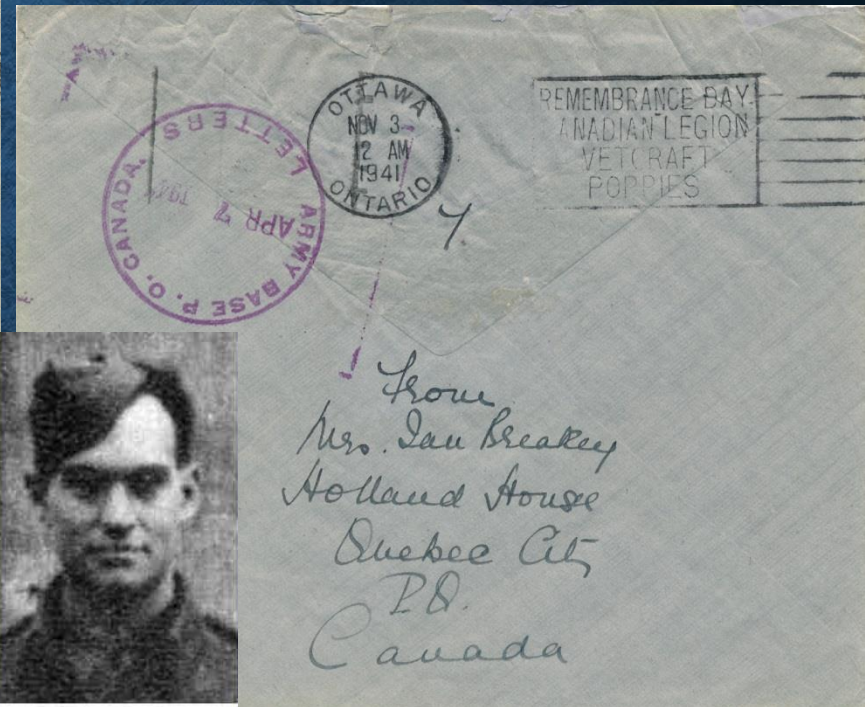
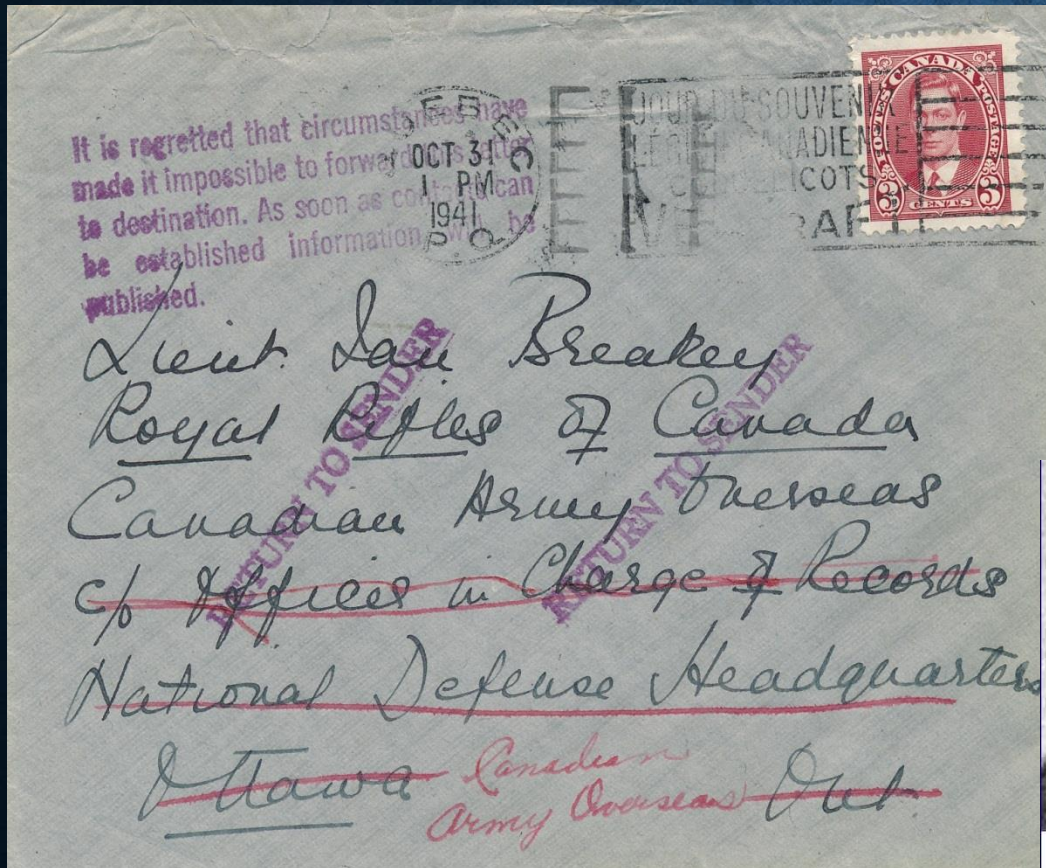
1 of 7 covers recorded with 2 strikes of Detained markings on same cover



# V) UNDELIVERABLE MAIL FROM CANADA TO HK

Sent on 1941 Oct 31 from Quebec City,  
returned on Apr 7<sup>th</sup> 1942

Shows that most, if not all, C-Force members did not receive any mail from relatives after they departed Canada on Oct 27<sup>th</sup>



Lieut | Breakey

(HKVCA website)

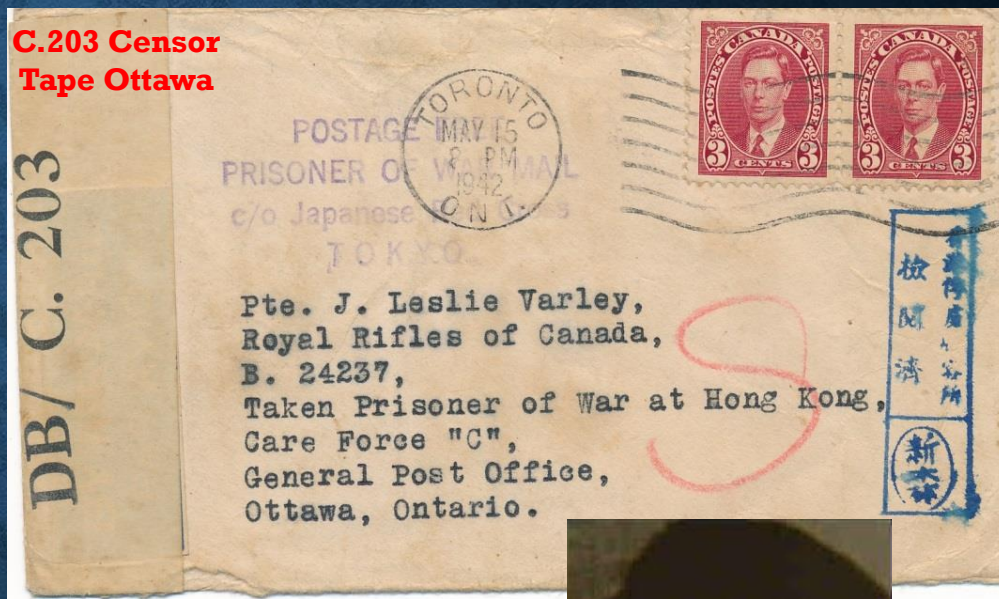
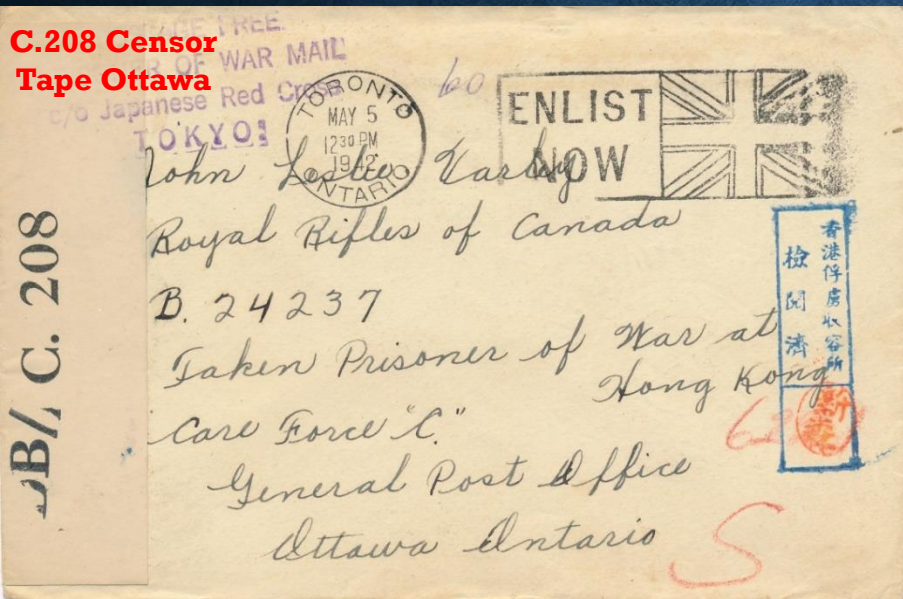
Addressed to Lieutenant **Ian Breakey**, D-Company, 16<sup>th</sup> Platoon Commander. He passed away in September 1998. He was 1 of 22 Lieutenants of RRC.

Ken Ellison (pg. 17) had a cover from same correspondence sent Oct 7<sup>th</sup> and returned to sender on 1942 Mar 17<sup>th</sup>.



# VI) MAIL TO POW IN HK

(Left) May 5<sup>th</sup> and (right) May 15<sup>th</sup> 1942 covers addressed to Corporal (promoted from private) **John Leslie Varley**, B24237, RRC. Wounded in action on Dec 25<sup>th</sup>, 1941. He was awarded the Military Medal (MM).



The large red "S" marked denotes Camp S, Sham Shui Po Camp, where about 7000 British Army & Navy were held with 100 US servicemen. Canadian POWs were moved to this camp from Sept 1942 and many were interned there until liberation. The blue box is "HK POW camp censor" marking and the small oval "chop" is the family name of the censor. Both censored by Niimori 新森.



B24237 Rfmm JL Varley  
(HKVCA website)

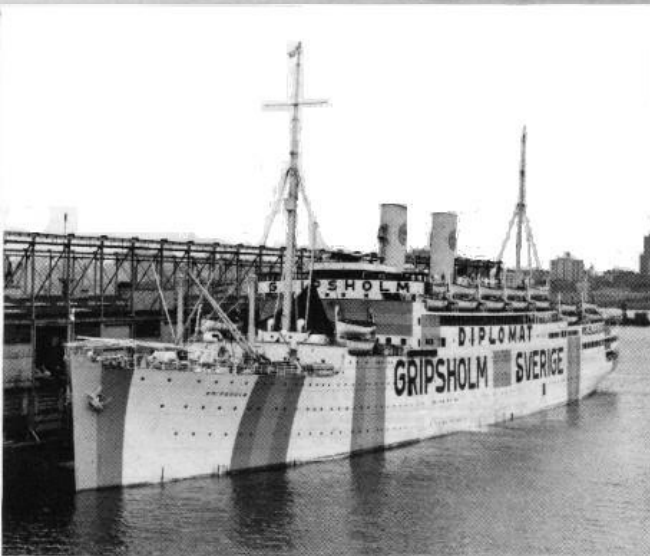
# HOW WERE THESE LETTERS MOST LIKELY TRANSFERRED FROM/TO HK?

2 exchanges were made, both carrying mail and civilian detainees from both sides

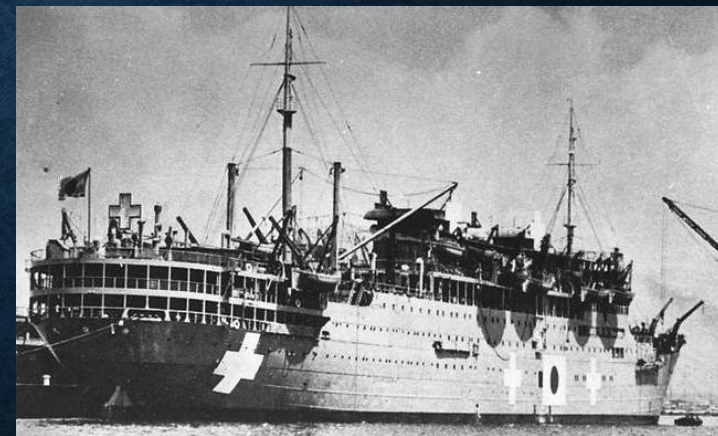
**Gripsholm** and **Tiea Maru** in **Mormugoa, Goa** for the second exchange in 1943



(from WW2christianfiction.com)



**Gripsholm**



**Tiea Maru**

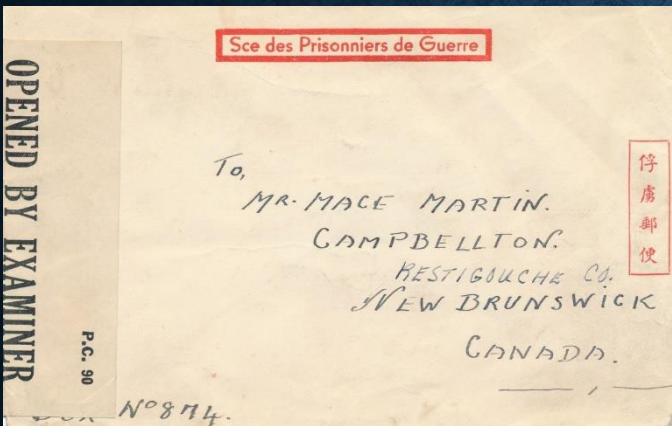




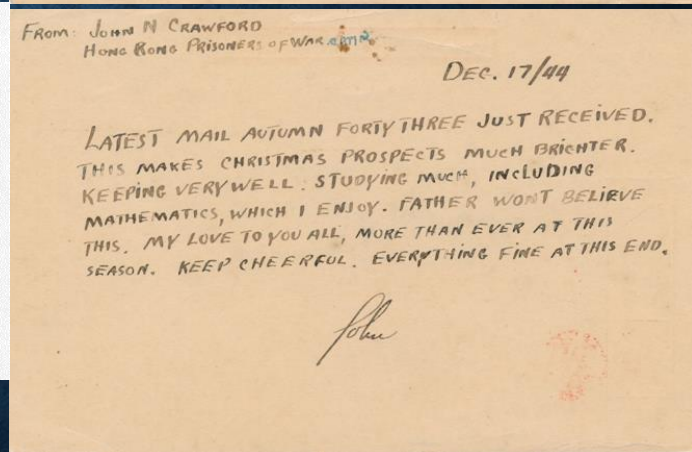
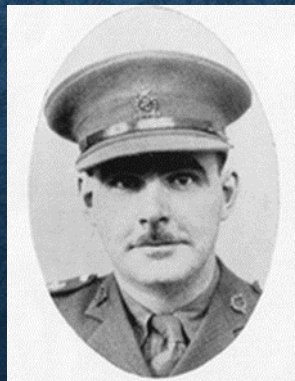
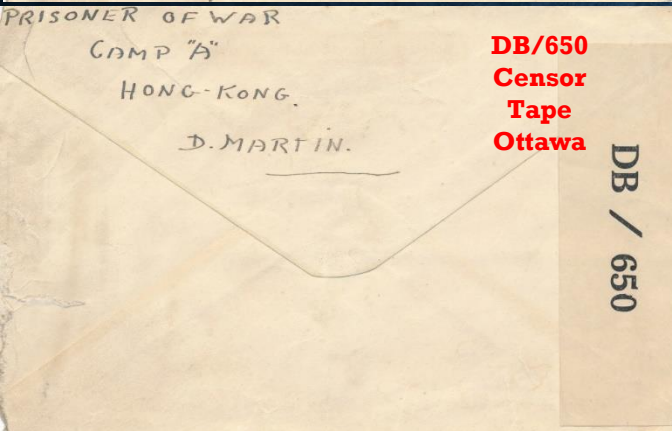
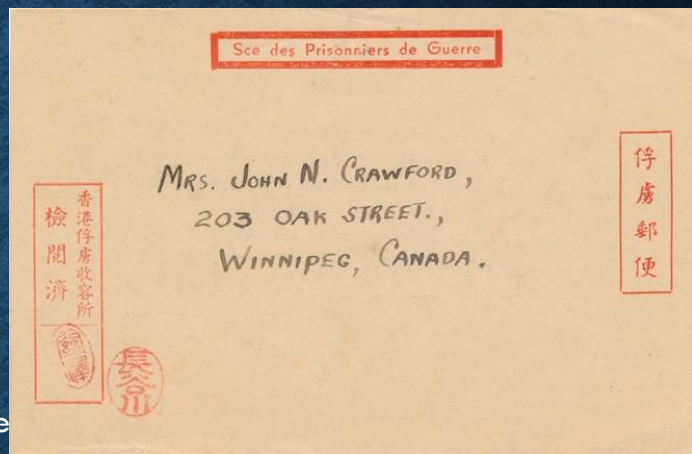
# MAIL FROM POW IN HK

Sent by Rifleman **Douglas John Martin**, E39302, D Company, 18<sup>th</sup> Platoon, RR, recorded as wounded-in-action. He was interned in HK until repatriation. He passed away in October 1998.

Sent by Major **John Neilson Brown CRAWFORD**, dateline 1944 Dec 17th. A member of the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps, he was appointed to HKVDC ambulance reporting to Brigade HQ and assigned to WG. He headed the medical facility while as a POW. He was awarded the MBE. He passed away in June 1997.



E30237 Rfmm DJ Martin (HKVCA website)



The use of a POW imprinted envelope, rather than a POW imprinted postcard, is very rare. The British censor label on the left is covering the Japanese censor marking below.

The Japanese had Crawford make a recording on POW life in HK in November 1942. This was broadcast over Radio Tokyo. About 15 people in the Western States picked it up on short wave. They eventually relayed the message to Crawford's wife. (Ellison, Force C, pg. 85)

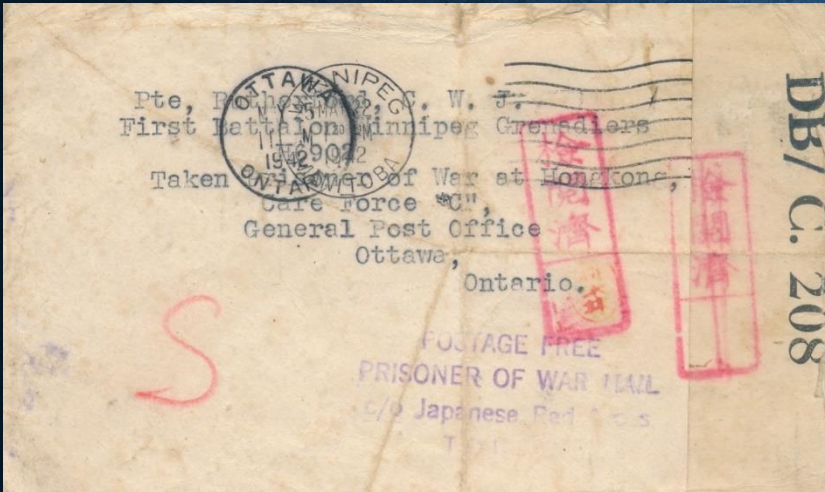


# MAIL TO POW IN HK/JAPAN

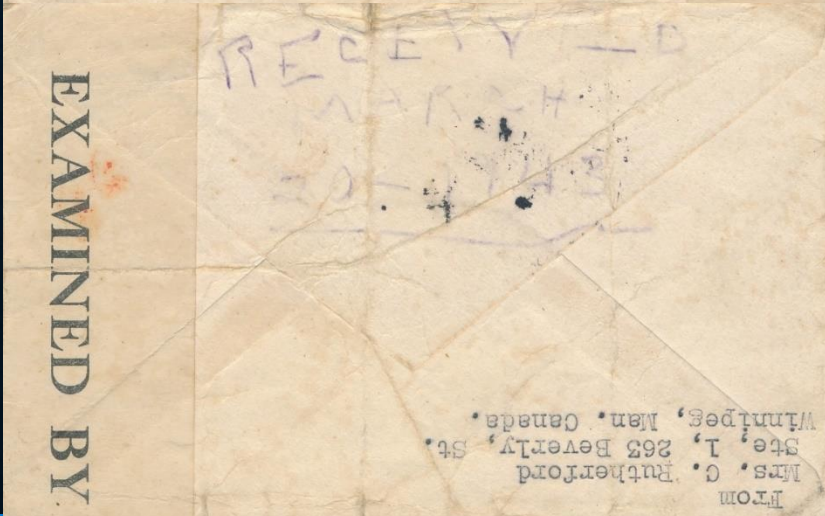
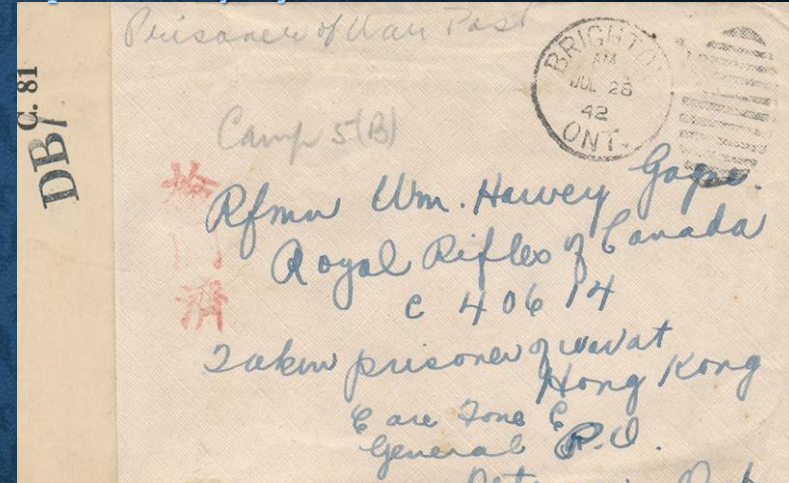


Sent from Winnipeg 1942 Mar 22<sup>nd</sup> with Ottawa transit May 25<sup>th</sup>, addressed to Private **Campbell William John Rutherford**, H6902, D Company, WG. He passed away in September 1989.

Sent from Brighton, ON 1942 July 28<sup>th</sup>, addressed to Rifleman **William Harvey Gagne**, C40614, RR. He was moved to Japan in Sept 1943 to Port of Niigata as a labourer moving foodstuff, mining coal in Rinko and as a labourer at a foundry in Shintesta, until liberation. He passed away in June 1996.



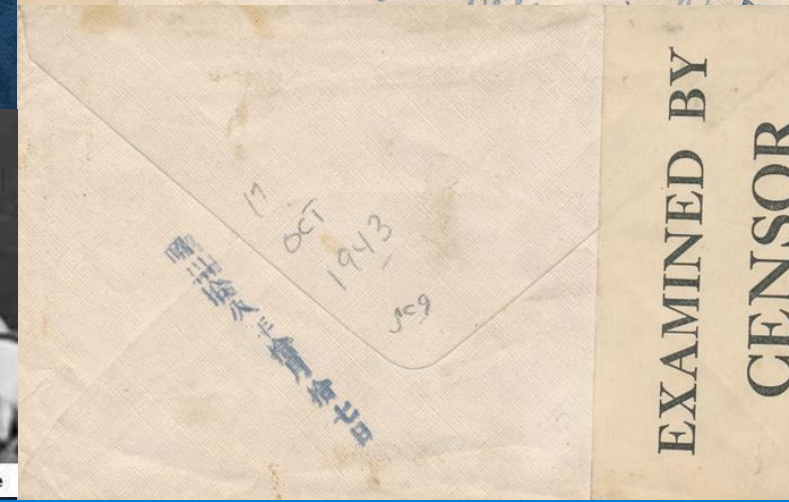
H6902 Pte CWJ Rutherford



(HKVCA website)



C40614 Rfman WH Gagne



Barely visible is: Received 1943 March 20<sup>th</sup> in blue pencil on back. Rare to record a notation of arrival date on POW mail.

The date stamp is Showa 18<sup>th</sup> year (1943) Oct 17<sup>th</sup>. Rare to record an arrival date on POW mail. Very rare if it was a marking.



### 3 THE BENTON CORRESPONDENCE

## Private Duncan Albert William Benton H2403, A-Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Winnipeg Grenadiers

Wounded in action 1941 Dec 21

In North Point Camp H, 1941 Dec 20 - Dec 21

In Argyle Camp A, 1941 Dec 22 - Dec 26

Captured and put in Sham Shui Po Camp S, 1942 Jan 22

In North Point Camp H 1942 Jan 22-Sep 26

In Sham Shui Po Camp S 1942 Sep 26-1945 Sep 10

Date of Death: 2003 Jan 1



H2403 Pte DAW Benton

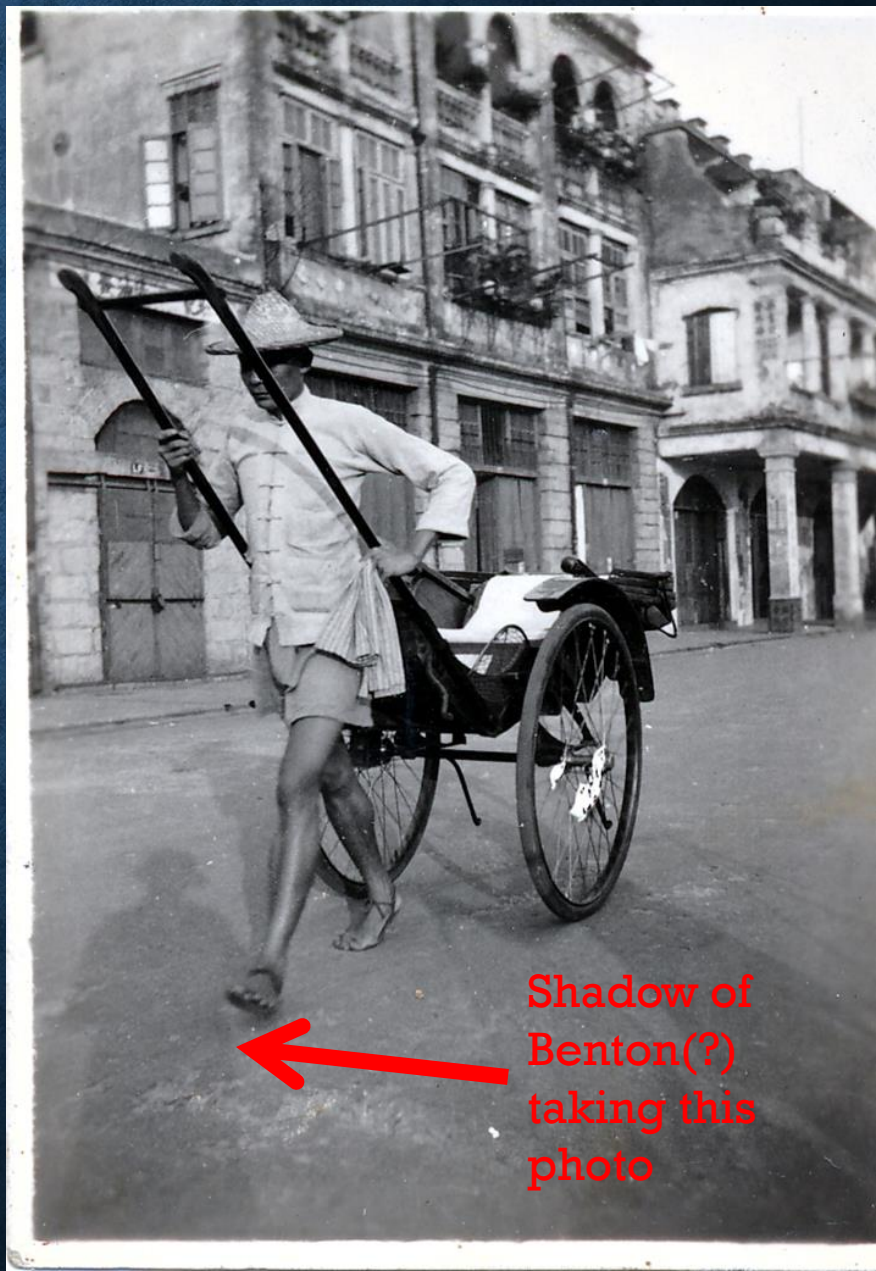
(HKVCA website)



**IN UNIFORM IN  
WINNIPEG**



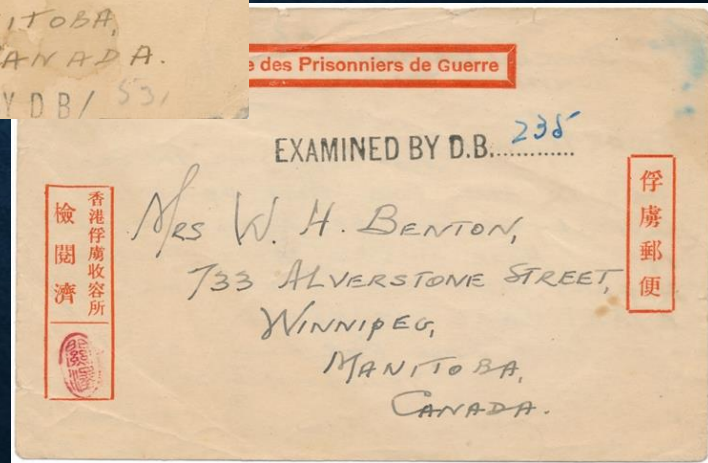
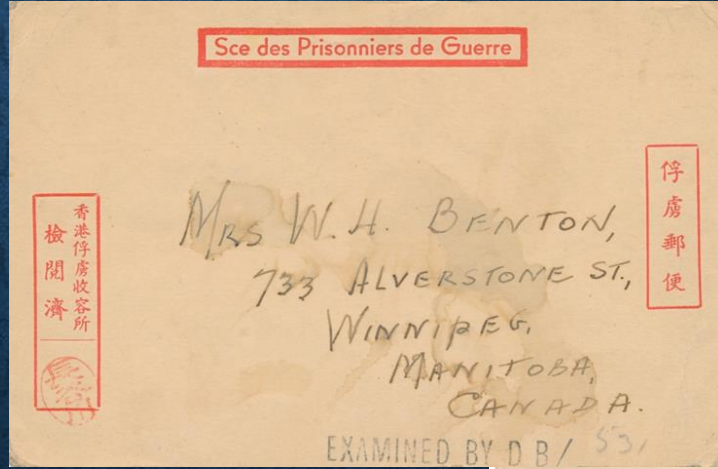
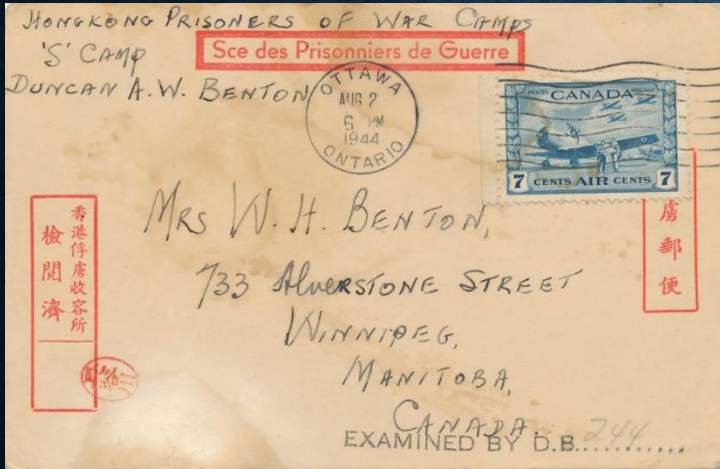
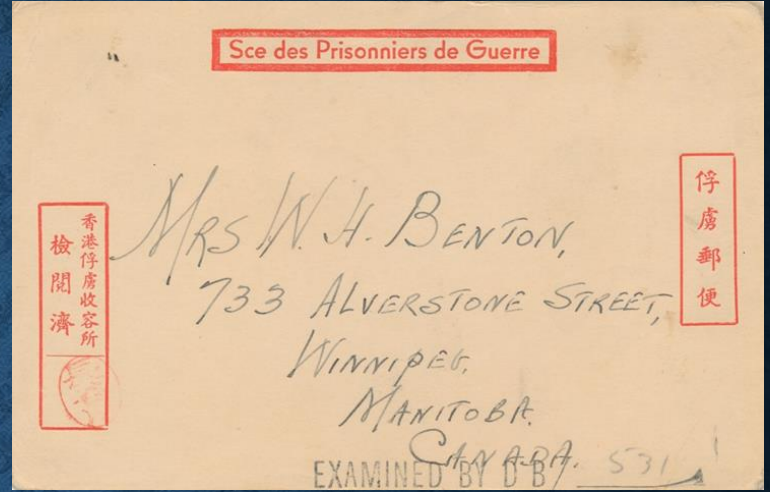
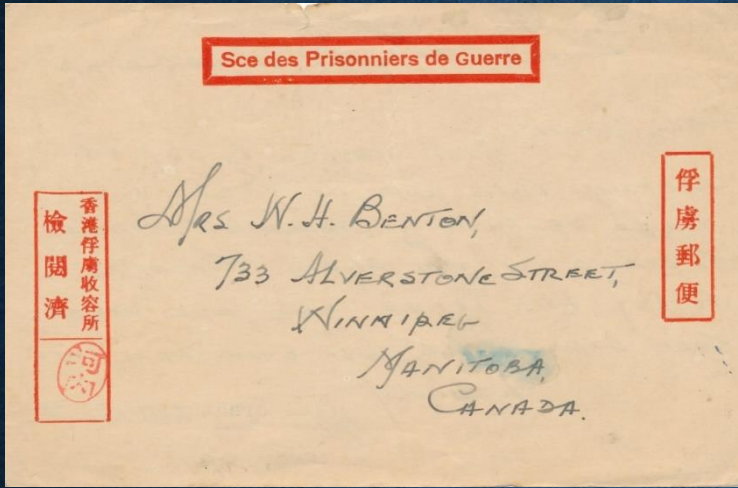
**ONLY PHOTO IN HK  
(RICKSHAW)**



**Shadow of  
Benton(?)  
taking this  
photo**



# 5 HK POW postal stationery card



## The back of the cards



FROM: DUNCAN A. W. BENTON,  
HONGKONG PRISONER OF WAR CAMP 'S'

DEAR MOTHER: JUST A WORD TO SAY AM  
KEEPING FINE AND NO NEED FOR  
YOU TO BE ANXIOUS. LOOKING FORWARD  
TO SEEING YOU ALL AGAIN. REGARDS  
TO IVY AND IRENE AND ALL OTHERS.  
TAKE EVERY CARE YOUR OWN DEAR SELF  
LOVINGLY  
Duncan A.W. Benton

FROM: DUNCAN A. W. BENTON,  
HONGKONG PRISONERS OF WAR CAMP 'S'

DEAR MOTHER:  
JUST HELLO TO SAY  
AM KEEPING QUITE WELL. HOPE  
THIS REACHES YOU THE SAME  
REGARDS TO MARGARET AND IVY.  
LOVINGLY  
DUNCAN

Dear Folks & Friends:

Just a line to

let you know I am still alive & well.  
Please give regards to Ivy, Brown, Mary,  
Anne & Margaret. I was sorry to  
hear about your troubles. I hope  
you are all better now. Hope Irene  
is well. I've got all four. No more  
for now. Hope to see you in  
Love & Kisses. B

FROM: DUNCAN A. W. BENTON  
HONGKONG PRISONER OF WAR CAMP 'S'

DEAR MOTHER:  
SHARING YOUR SORROW  
OVER DAD'S DEATH. AM KEEPING  
WELL. DON'T WORRY. TAKE EVERY  
CARE FOND EST LOVE FOR ALL  
FAMILY. AS EVER  
Duncan

FROM: DUNCAN BENTON, NOVEMBER 27 1944  
HONGKONG PRISONERS OF WAR CAMP.

DEAR MOTHER: JUST REPORTING IN GOOD  
HEALTH AND FIND TIME PASSING  
QUICKLY SO DON'T BE ANXIOUS ABOUT  
ME. HOPE SISTER AND HUSBAND  
HAPPILY MARRIED. JUST TAKE  
EVERY CARE YOURSELF.  
LOVE FOR ALL  
YOUR LOVING SON  
Duncan

Notice the handwriting  
styles of these cards



# WHY I MUST BUY THIS CORRESPONDENCE:

## 4 PENCIL WRITTEN NOTES MADE BY BENTON OF THE CASUALTIES LISTINGS OF WG WHEN HE WAS INTERNED AS A POW IN CAMP S

List 1

Killed-in-Action

back

Winnipeg Grenadiers  
Casualty List  
Hong Kong, China.

Killed in Action

Maj. Gresham, A. B.  
Capt. Bowman, A. S.  
" Tarbutth, L. T.  
Lieut. Birkett, G. A.  
" David, J. A. V.  
" Finch, C. D.  
" Hooper, A. J.  
" Young, H. J.

H-6062 C.S.M. Rydell, W.B.  
-6008 " Osborne, J.R.  
-6477 Sgt. Foster, R.M.  
-6019 " Johnston, H.  
-6211 " Patterson, G.H.  
-6086 " Rodgers, E.H.  
-6443 " Vickers, F.J.  
-6012 1/2 Sgt. Woods, A.T.  
-6567 Sp7. Eccles, N.C.  
-6499 " Kelso, H.  
-6038 " Kelso, J.R.  
-3031 " Starred, E.G.  
-6295 1/2 Lt. Land, R.C.  
-6501 " Smith, C.E.  
-6275 " Specht, W.J.  
-2970 " Starred, W.J.  
-6576 Pte. Arken, J.A.  
-6463 " Barrett, W.  
-6574 " Brady, J.  
-17006 " Carberry, S.R.  
-6350 " Carraig, W.T.  
-6130 " Caswell, G.J.  
-77426 " Cooper, K.S.  
-6527 " Donovan, V.A.  
-70208 " Falster, D.H.  
-6113 " Foord, F.M.

H-6549 Pte. Gagne, L.  
-6707 " Grace, R.W.  
-17704 " Gray, J.R.  
-36817 " Hargreaves, J.  
-6831 " Kasijan, M.  
-6922 " KizFolke, W.N.  
-6902 1/2 Lt. Edgel, G.  
-6289 Pte. Land, G.S.  
-6141 " Larsen, R.E.A.  
-6860 " Law, G.  
-6301 " Lawrie, R.R.  
-6163 " Maltese, J.  
-6014 " Maltes, T.  
-6197 " Mathews, D.C.  
-6745 " Maxwell, R.C.  
-6540 " Meades, R.R.  
-6162 " Morris, J.L.  
-6143 " McBride, W.F.  
-6883 " McFarlan, G.W.  
-6938 " McGowan, R.C.  
-6644 " O'Neil, D.J.  
-6526 " Oullotte, J.P.R.  
-6810 " Pave, G.J.  
-77410 " Praska, H.  
-41805 " Prieston, W.A.  
-64417 " Rutherford, G.P.  
-6813 " Smelts, E.C.  
-6353 " Stodgett, S.F.  
-6338 " Teasedale, G.  
-6894 " Walker, N.E.  
-6140 " Whalen, B.B.  
-6564 " Williams, J.  
-41668 " Wojnarsky, J.  
-65230 " Woytowich, F.  
-6299 " Wright, R.F.  
-6659 " Pontius, J.W.

H-6646 Pte. Small, F. A. H. L.  
-77148 " White, H.  
H-6609 1/2 Lt. Marv, L. M.



# PENCIL WRITTEN NOTES MADE BY BENTON OF THE CASUALTIES LISTINGS OF WG WHEN HE WAS INTERNED AS A POW IN CAMP S

**Died in Hospital**

**List 2**

**and Missing**

**back**

Died in Hosp.  
 Lieut. McKillop, O.W.  
 H-6884 Pte. Gunn, J.J.  
 6774 " Kelly, L.B.J.  
 6932 " Orris, H.  
 41855 " T.??, E.B.  
 6887 " Osadchuck, N.A.

Lt. Col. Subcliff, J.L.R.

Missing  
 Lieut. Mitchell, W.V.  
 " Mitchell, E.L.

H-6382 Sgt. Dunsford, E.C.  
 6107 " Ferguson, C.E.  
 6005 " King, J.  
 6293 Pte. Agerback, T.G.  
 20648 " Beltz, C.M.  
 6056 Pte. Boyd, D.V.  
 6558 " Beckie, V.  
 6731 " Morgan, A.W.  
 6960 Pte. Abraz?, H.  
 46581 " Atkinson, W.L.  
 L-2957 " Baptiste, E.H.  
 H-20873 " Barron, O.A.  
 77586 " Blanchard, R.  
 63696 " Chaloyer, M.  
 20604 " Christenson, F.E.  
 6575 " Davis, A.H.  
 6750 " DesLauriers, L.  
 6642 " Dewswell, M.S.  
 6911 " Forster, H.T.  
 6787 " Frobisher, D.  
 M-65920 " Girard, D.  
 H-64719 " Goodman, O.  
 L-13706 " Granger, A.R.  
 H-77354 " Brentham, W.O.  
 6800 " Breiverson, H.L.  
 642 " Harrett, L.M.

H-6577. Pte. Harity, F.W.  
 6920 " Haristy, W.  
 6862 " Johnston, C.H.J.  
 L-22250 " Johnson, L.W.  
 H-6313 " Jonsson, T.  
 6903 " Ketzas, W.R.  
 41796 " Little, F.  
 17470 " Lowrey, E.D.  
 6719 " Lowe, J.R.  
 26247 " MacCormick, M.S.  
 6759 " Novak, L.  
 6875 " Owen, R.  
 20529 " Pappas, L.  
 L-2858 " Parenteau, W.J.  
 H-6495 " Paulsen, R.L.P.  
 6304 " Prociński, P.  
 H-2850 " Ross, V.  
 H-6303 " Shkoby, M.  
 -6105 " Shore, W.C.  
 6561 " Silkey, S.  
 6088 " Simpson, K.  
 6598 " Smith, C.E.  
 L-13729 " Smith, R.C.  
 H-6010 " Smith, W.J.C.  
 6675 " Swanson, E.  
 41649 " Tompkins, J.E.  
 6584 " Whiteside, J.E.  
 17893 " White, T.C.  
 6819 " Willis, C.  
 6476 " Wilson, W.J.





# PENCIL WRITTEN NOTES MADE BY BENTON OF THE CASUALTIES LISTINGS OF WG WHEN HE WAS INTERNED AS A POW IN CAMP S

## List 3

Died after 25 Dec 41

## List 4

Died in Hospital  
after the War.  
(after 25/Dec/41)

Pte. Lucas.  
Chapman - H-6241.  
L/Sp2. Whillier  
Pte. Smith. J.S.  
Moore. D.H.  
Hawkes.  
Harkness  
Cpl. Iverach.  
Pte. Moffat. E.W.  
Armstrong  
Robiddux  
Mabb  
Moore W.S.  
Iles. P.J.  
Nichols D.S.  
Pearson  
Thomasson  
Forbes  
Eastholme  
LaPlante R.J.  
Howard. H.S.  
Freeman  
Whitbread  
Pastuk  
Raites  
Coady  
Foster.

Lewis. J. M.      PhiFer.  
Manne            Sol Slos Ki  
LaRivierre      Major. Hook.  
Lte. Harper.  
Pte. Chewler. G.  
Sioux  
Mannall  
Gemmell  
Capt. Terry  
Pte. Smith. W.A.R.  
Sgt. Abel  
Pte. Rodd.  
Cpl. Green  
Pte. Foxall  
L/Sp1. Singleton  
Pte. Sumner.  
" Oige  
" Seadgall G.  
" Davis J.J.  
" Johnson. D.J.  
" Brawn. A.  
L/Sp1. P. Thinson R.  
Pte. Badger. G.  
Pte. Hamelin F.



## 4 THE DOWLING CORRESPONDENCE

**Signalman Lawrence Fredrick  
Dowling** B32015, Brigade HQ,  
**Royal Canadian Corps of Signals  
(RCCS)**



(HKVCA website)

The first 2 Canadian casualties of WWII were 2 Royal Canadian Corps of Signals stationed at Sham Shui Po during the first attack. This was the same unit and location where Dowling was posted!

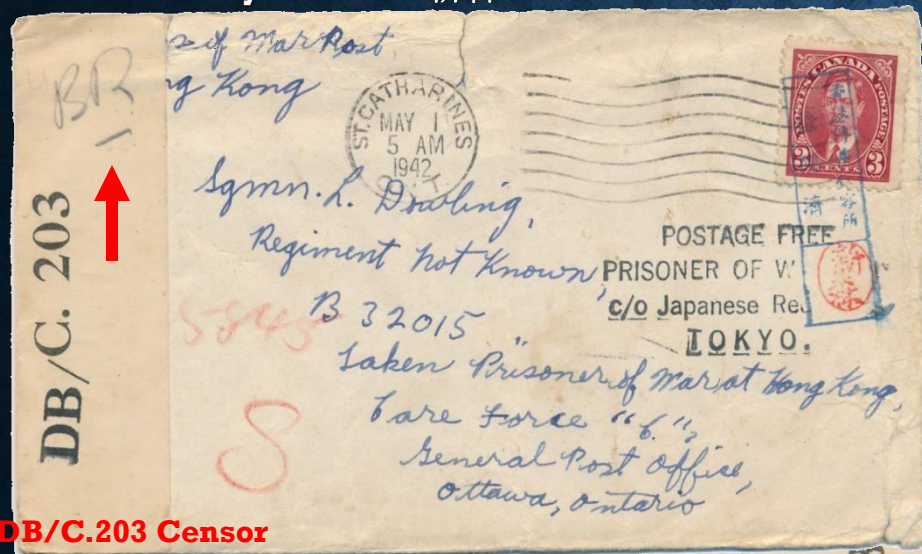
Record only showed he was interned at Sham Shui Po, Camp S, from Sept 1942 till liberation. It did not show whether he was interned at North Point, Camp H, before Sept 1942. (HKVCA website)

With item 4 in this correspondence, we can now add to the knowledge that he was indeed interned at North Point, Camp H before Sept 1942, as there were directing instructions to deliver to Camp H.

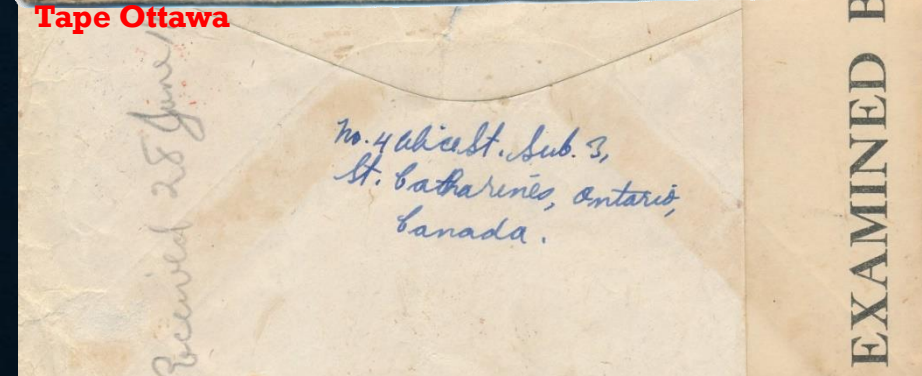
Dowling belonged to this very small HQ force, which was the third component dispatched to Hong Kong. They were often forgotten and overshadowed by their much bigger cousins, The Winnipeg Grenadiers and Royal Rifles of Canada.



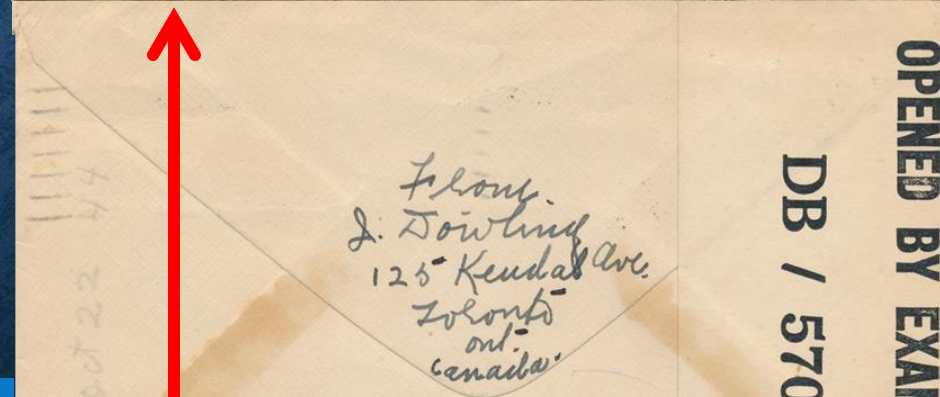
**Item 1:** Sent from St. Catharines, ON 1942 May 1<sup>st</sup>. By the time it reached Dowling in 1943 June 28<sup>th</sup>, he was already interned at Camp S. Censored by Niimori 新森.



DB/C.203 Censor  
Tape Ottawa



**Item 2:** Sent from Toronto, ON 1942 Sept 8<sup>th</sup> written by his aunt, directed to Camp S and received 1944 Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>. Censored by Matsuda 松田. The BR in red has been crossed out and S added.

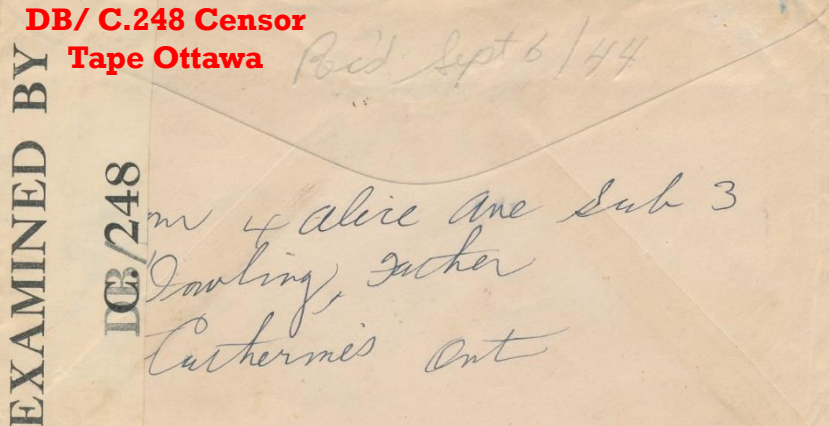
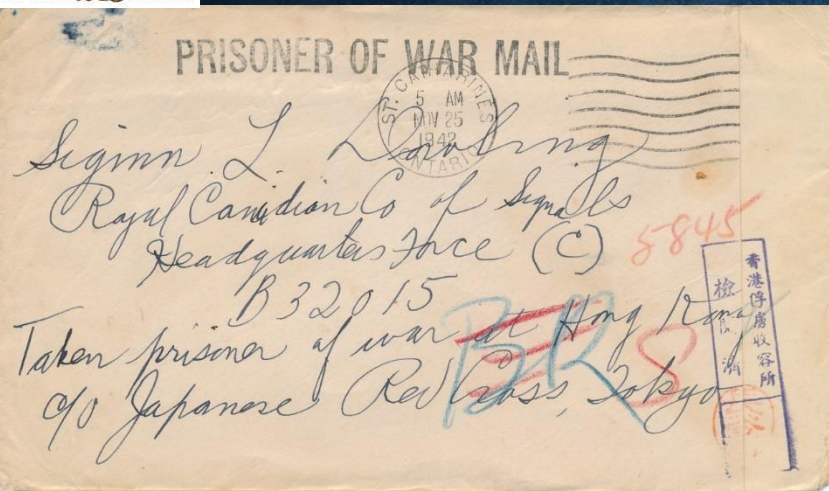


An important item clearly endorsed for SS Gripsholm's second transfer in Oct 1943. It took another year for the letter to reach Dowling.

Thanks to Mark Bailey, whom within hours of seeing these covers, researched and proved that BR stands for Bowen Road Hospital. He was able to substantiate from interview notes with Leslie Malcolm Canivet (Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps), Dowling's buddy, that Dowling was indeed at Bowen Road Hospital.

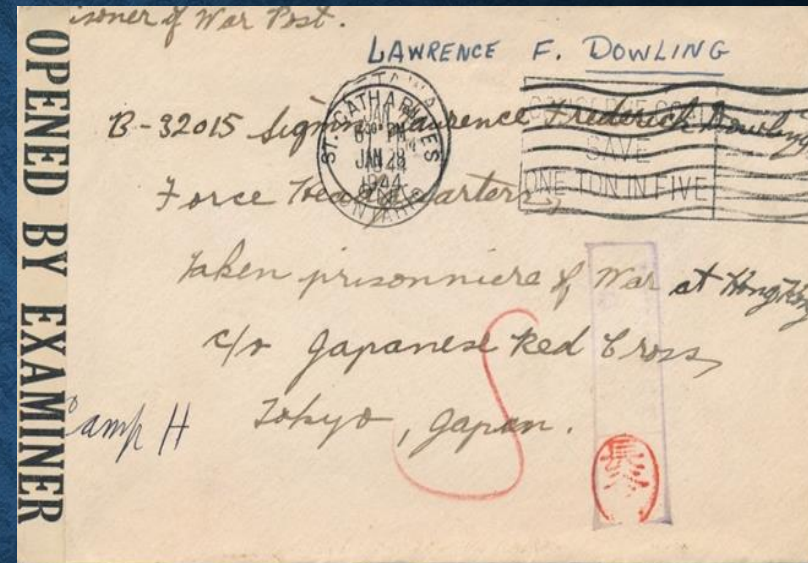


**Item 3:** Sent from St. Catharines, ON 1942 Nov 25<sup>th</sup> written by his father and directed to Camp S and received 1944 Sept 6. Censored by Hasegawa 長谷川. BR crossed out and replaced by S.



This item had relatively similar originating and receiving dates when compared to the previous item, even though this had no endorsement to be shipped by SS Gripsholm. 5845 seemed to be a POW number put on in HK.

**Item 4:** Sent from St. Catharines ON 1944 Jan 28<sup>th</sup> written by his mother, directed to Camp S and received 1945 Jan 28<sup>th</sup>. Censored by Hasegawa 長谷川.



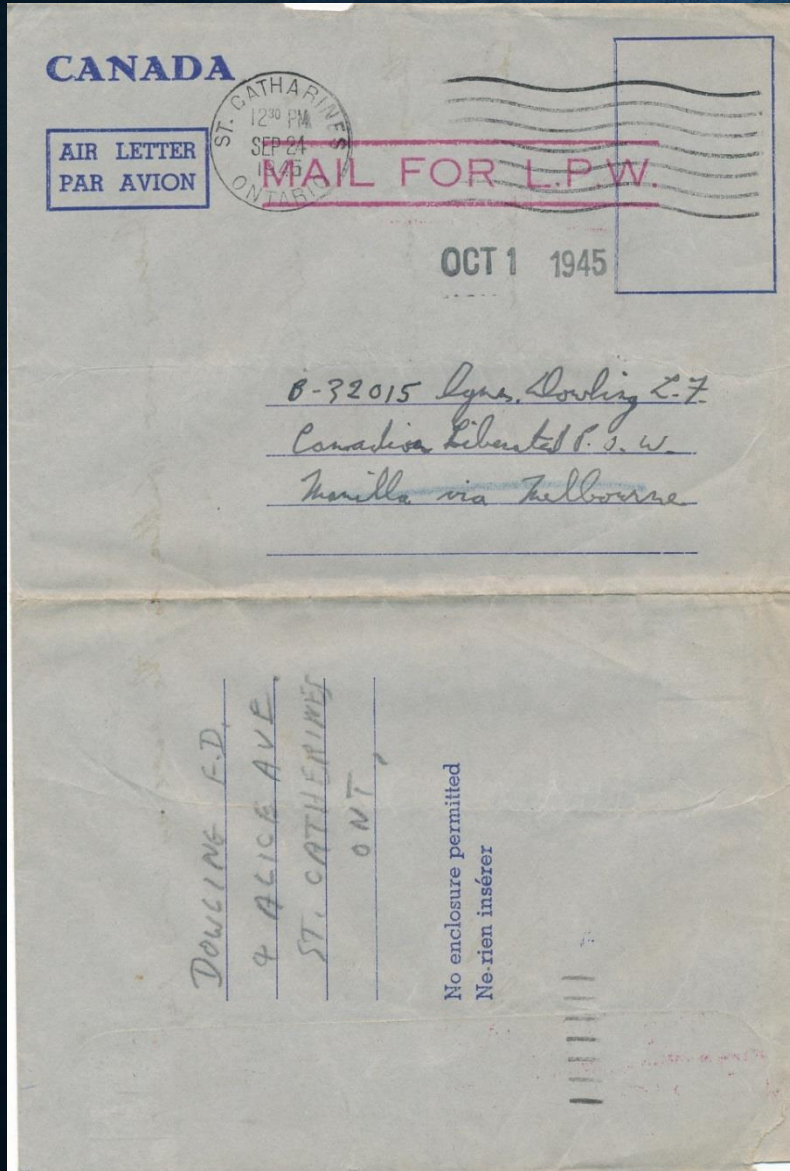
With Mark Bailey's research, now we know that Dowling moved from Bowen Road Hospital to North Point (Camp H), and when that closed he was moved to Sham Shui Po Camp.



# Why I must buy this correspondence:

Item 5/6: "Mail for L.P.W. air letter"

(Liberated Prisoners of War)



CANADA

AIR LETTER  
PAR AVION

ST. CATHARINES  
12:00 PM  
SEP 24  
ONTARIO

MAIL FOR L.P.W.

OCT 1 1945

8-32015 Lynn Dowling L.F.  
Canadian Liberated P.O.W.  
Manilla via Melbourne

DOWLING F.D.  
4 ALICE AVE.  
ST. CATHARINES  
ONT.

No enclosure permitted  
Ne rien insérer

Mail for LPW  
air letters are  
very rare.



CANADA

AIR LETTER  
PAR AVION

ST. CATHARINES  
3:00 PM  
OCT 1 1945  
ONTARIO

MAIL FOR L.P.W.



Sign Dowling  
832015, Lorraine Fredrick Dowling  
Face Headquarters  
Can Liberated prisoners of war  
Vancouver BC. M P 1/1/46

L. Dowling  
4 Alice Ave  
St Catharines Ont

No enclosure permitted  
Ne rien insérer



# ITEM 7 WELCOME HOME CARD PRESENTED TO WG MEMBERS



Welcome Home

Gallant defenders of Hong Kong  
Manitoba Salutes You

Train Reception Committee  
Greater Winnipeg Co-ordinating Board

# ITEM 8 NOTICE TO ALLIED POW AND CIVILIAN INTERNEES

## NOTICE TO ALLIED PRISONERS OF WAR AND CIVILIAN INTERNEES



The Japanese Government has accepted the Allied peace terms set forth in the Potsdam Declaration. Final negotiations are being concluded.

An official representative is on his way for humanitarian purposes and liaison with this headquarters. He will be an initial, pre-Allied occupation representative in the interest of welfare needs and general conditions in the area or camp to which he is sent.

He will coordinate with the Red Cross and Japanese Military and Government, all plans to assure the security of the personnel concerned, to take emergency action to properly house, feed, clothe and furnish medical assistance to such personnel, and to assist in maintaining order in camps awaiting occupational forces.

He will not have authority to act for the Allied Forces in the rendering of any decisions, military, civil or otherwise. Until such time as allied occupational forces arrive to accept the surrender of Japanese military forces, those military forces are responsible for all such control and decisions in conformity with the terms of surrender and the dictates of the Supreme Allied Command.

(Signed) **A. C. WEDEMEYER**  
Lieutenant General, U.S.A.  
Commanding

VJ-102

*Aug. 18, 1945 15 (4:30 PM)*

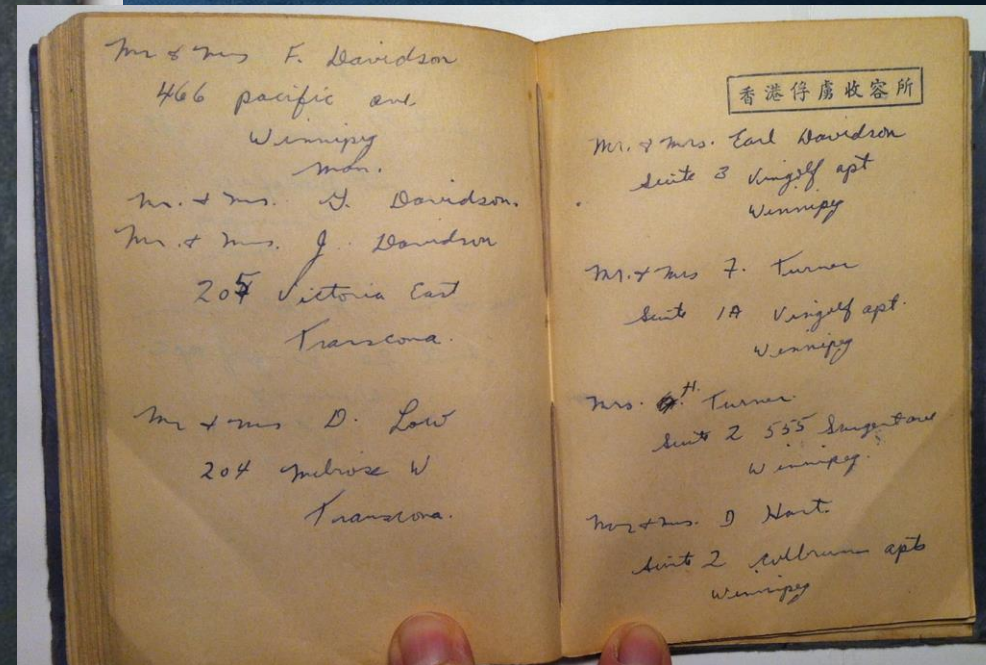
### 全日本軍指揮官、官吏及び 一般日本人居留民ニ告ク

日本帝國政府ハ 陛下ノ御哉可ヲ仰キ聯合國ニ依ツテ  
ナサレタル七月廿六日ノ無條件降伏宣言ヲ受諾セリ 停  
戰ニ關スル詳細ナル規定ハ現在日本政府ト聯合國各政府  
間ニテ協議中ナルモ決定次第諸子ニ通告ス  
二 在華聯合軍最高司令部ハソノ代表者ヲ諸子ノ地域ニ派  
シテ聯合軍俘虜及ヒ非戦闘員收容者トシテ聯絡ヲナサシム  
三 諸子ハ降伏條件及ヒ聯合軍最高司令部ノ命令ニ從ヒ有  
ラズ努力ヲ以テ此ノ人道的役割ヲ援助スヘシ  
四 諸子ノ地域ニ於ケル全聯合軍俘虜及ヒ非戦闘員收容者  
ニ對スル食料衣服ノ供給及ヒ治療手當ノ續行且ツ一般ノ  
安寧維持ヲ諸子ニ命ス 更ニ諸子ハ國際赤十字社及ヒ本  
司令部ノ代表者ニ協力スルト共ニ聯合國釋放者ノ安全ヲ  
保護シ彼等釋放者ノ安寧維持ノ爲ノ臨時對策ヲ講スルコ  
トヲ諸子ニ命ス  
聯合軍駐屯兵カ諸子ノ地域ニ到達シテ日本軍ノ降伏手續  
ヲ完了シ更ニソノ地域ノ管理ヲ繼承スル迄ハ日本軍指揮官  
諸子ハ治安維持ノ責任アルコトヲ心得ルヘシ  
在華米軍總司令部  
陸軍中將 A. C. ウェデマイヤー(署名)  
A. C. WEDEMEYER



## ITEM 9 Dowling's Notebook

Small note book Dowling had made with POW stationery that he used as a record of his friendship with fellow POWs and their addresses; also with messages and drawings from his peers



# 5 THE LESTER CORRESPONDENCE



E30070 Rfmm WE Lester

(HKVCA website)

**Rifleman Wilbert Ernest  
Lester**

**E30117 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion / HQ  
Company  
Royal Rifles of Canada**



(HKVCA website)

Wounded in Action 1941 Dec 19

Was in Stanley Hospital during the massacre

Captured at Stanley Hospital 1941 Dec 30

In North Point Camp from 1941 Dec 30 to 1942 Sep 26

In Shum Shui Po Camp from 1942 Sep 26 to 1943 Jan 19

Transported to Japan from 1943 Jan 19 and put to work at  
Nippon Steel Tubes in Tsurumi Shipyard until 1945 May 13

Transferred to work at Joban Coal Mining Company from 1945  
May 13 to 1945 Sep 15

Day of Death: 2003 Sep 19



ITEMS  
1/2



ROYAL RIFLES OF CANADA (C.A.)  
QUEBEC, P. Q.



Mr. Wm. H. Lester,  
SOUTH DURHAM, P. Q.



Department of National Defence

QUOTE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Ottawa, Canada,  
October 31, 1942.

Mr. William H. Lester,  
South Durham, P.Q.

I am sure that you were greatly relieved when you received word that your son, E30070 Rfn. Lester, Wilbert was officially listed as a prisoner of war. The suspense of all these long months has been trying on everyone who had a dear one at Hong Kong, and I know you will now wish information as to what is being done regarding the forwarding of mail and parcels.

Unfortunately, up to the present the Japanese have not permitted the forwarding of parcels except on the diplomatic exchange vessels, and the steamer GRIPSHOLM which was scheduled to leave some time ago on its second trip is still waiting in New York, but as soon as arrangements with the Japanese for the exchange of personnel are completed, the steamer will sail. All mail that has been received at the Post Office in Ottawa will go forward on the GRIPSHOLM and in addition the Canadian Red Cross are sending food parcels, and the Canadian Government, through the Red Cross, have shipped medicines, tobacco and cigarettes, winter and summer uniforms and warm clothing, as well as boots and blankets.

We believe that this will all reach Hong Kong before the winter weather sets in there.

As the GRIPSHOLM on its present trip is entirely loaded with all the above items, there is no space for additional packages, but you can be assured that as soon as an opportunity offers for shipment of next-of-kin parcels you will be notified and a label will be sent to you so that you can forward a parcel.

You may continue to send mail addressed as follows, and it will be forwarded via Russia until the opportunity offers to forward it by steamer direct.

Prisoner of War Post  
Base Post Office, Ottawa.

Postage Free

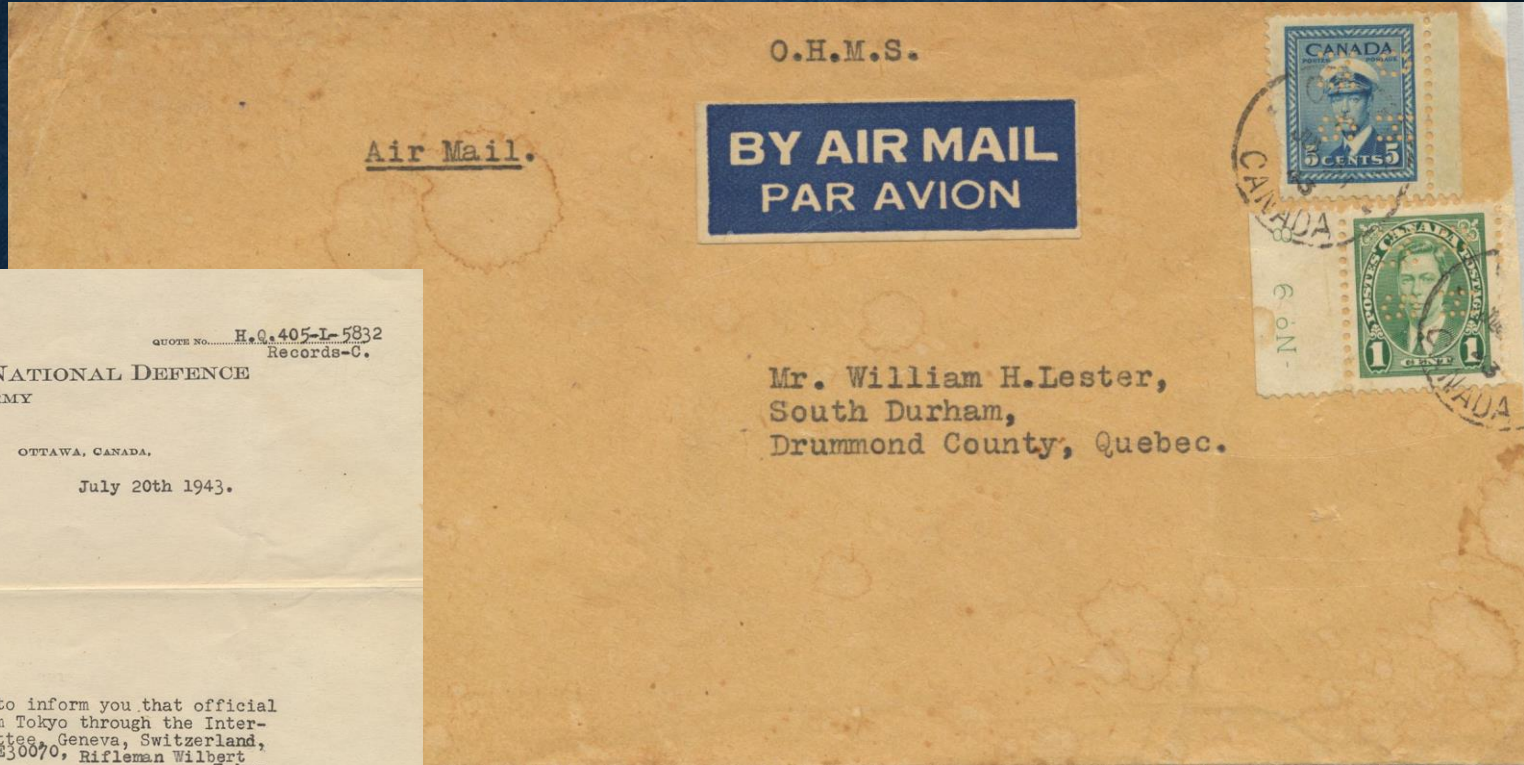
Lester became a POW after the capitulation of Hong Kong. His father was notified about the Fall of Hong Kong by the letter in this cover dated **1942 January 7**. At the time, the fate of Lester was unknown. The letter had since been lost.

A follow-up letter dated **1942 October 31** from Royal Rifles of Canada to Lester's father. It took that long to confirm Lester was still alive and had become interned as a POW.

It also told of Gripsholm's second trip to exchange personnel with all mail addressed to the POWs that were already sent to Ottawa.



# ITEMS 3/4



Air Mail.

O.H.M.S.

**BY AIR MAIL  
PAR AVION**



Mr. William H. Lester,  
South Durham,  
Drummond County, Quebec.



QUOTE No. H.Q. 405-L-5832  
Records-C.  
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE  
ARMY

OTTAWA, CANADA,

Air Mail

July 20th 1943.

Mr. William H. Lester,  
South Durham,  
Drummond County, Que.

Dear Sir;

I am directed to inform you that official information received from Tokyo through the International Red Cross Committee, Geneva, Switzerland, advises that your son, E30070, Rifleman Wilbert Lester, has been transferred to a Tokyo Camp, Japan, from Hong Kong. The date of transfer and camp number were not stated.

However, should further information concerning his welfare be received, you will be immediately advised.

Yours truly,

*G. Robertson, Lieut.*  
for Colonel,  
Director of Records,  
for Adjutant-General.

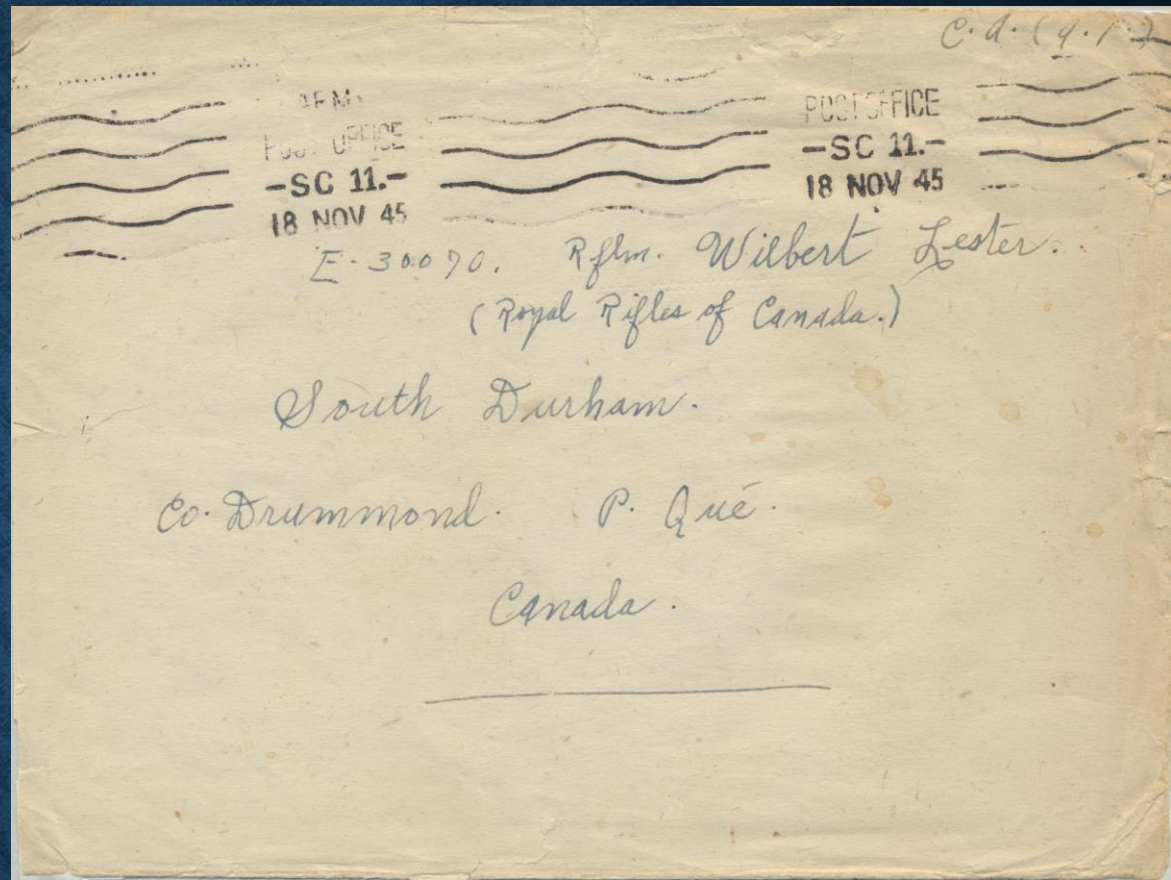
HBF/ARB.

- Dated 1943 July 20 from the Department of National Defence to Lester's father notifying him of Lester's transfer from Hong Kong to a POW Camp in Tokyo.



## ITEM 5

- Letter written by **Corporal A. Noel** RRC to Lester with PO SC11 marking of 1945 November 18. Lester would most likely have been repatriated and be back at his family's home in South Durham, Quebec.



Lester became a carpenter and after his retirement, he was seen walking daily to the local post office with his friend **Eddie Campbelton**, who was also in the Royal Rifles of Canada and a former Hong Kong POW.



(HKVCA website)

# IN SUMMARY

Postal History items for WG as Y-Force in Jamaica as forerunner, on route to HK, arrival in HK, detained mail, returned mail and POW mail HK/Japan.

- **Benton Correspondence WG** (use of HK POW cards from HK to Canada, his hand written record of the casualty list in HK and some of his photos at home and in Jamaica)
- **Dowling Correspondence RCCS** (letters from Canada to HK POW camp, his notebook made from POW stationery, the rare LPW letter sheets, Welcome Home card and notice to Allied POW and civilians)
- **Lester Correspondence RRC** (notices from Canadian government to POW families)



# WITH GEORGE MACDONELL, RRC 2016



**THANK YOU**

